And It All Leads Back to You

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Fandom: Dream SMP

Relationships: Justin | TimeDeo & TommyInnit, Bitzel & Justin | TimeDeo & Kit |

Wispexe & Luke | LukeOrSomething & TommyInnit

Characters: TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF), Justin | TimeDeo, Bitzel (Video

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(Video Blogging RPF), BAMF TommyInnit (Video Blogging RPF), yes even at the ripe old age of eight, Kid Fic, i think???, TommyInnit-centric

(Video Blogging RPF), but not a tommyinnit pov exciting i know, Protective Justin | TimeDeo, BAMF Justin | TimeDeo, Kit | Wispexe is Angry, Pandora's Vault Prison, Gangs, Violence, Fluff, there is also fluff!, There is also Angst!, Angst, Minor Character Death, Bit o' blood,

no beta we die like me trying to edit this

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And It All Leads Back to You

by ellis (ellabellachicketychella)

Summary

The story of Thomas Underscore, before he was Thomas Underscore, and how Business Bay both created him and ruined him, through the eyes of the leader of Business Bay, Deo.

Deo is eighteen when he becomes the leader of Business Bay.

He's eighteen when he hears about a kid who blew up his house—

And he's been nineteen for a few minutes when he helps the kid fake his death, finds him a new birth certificate and decides that he will always be protected by Business Bay.

or, we find out why Tommy's morals are so fucked, why he needs buckets of therapy, and why he's like *that*.

Notes

Warnings: violence, minor character death, bodies, guns, blood (it's a rather violent fic as Deo is the leader of a violent gang), gangs, implied/referenced child abuse

HI FRIENDS!!!! Welcome to the biggest snippet of Tommy's backstory we will get until... well he tells Wilbur about it in the main fic, this is through the eyes of Deo! It is also the first (AND ONLY (well that might change)) snippet we see of the end of TINAAOS, that's right bitches. We get like 2 clues about the end of TINAAOS, fucking enjoy!

I apologise for the inaccurate characterisation, Wisp's is based on the fact that on SMPEarth he kinda... ditches Business Bay to join the Antarctic Empire, I made Deo semi-responsible because it made sense, and I had no clue what to do with Luke and Bitzel so they're just kinda there

Theorists, uh... I will be honest there isn't a lot to like disect here that you haven't already found in the main fic, but there's still some pieces in here.

I hope you enjoy the tragedy that is Business Bay, because I sure as fuck do!

See the end of the work for more <u>notes</u>

Deo is eighteen when he becomes the leader of Business Bay. His dad dies in a shootout and because Deo was second in charge he's now the leader. He doesn't get to go to his father's funeral because there are things to be done, loose ends to tie up and no time to mourn. He was supposed to go to university—sure, he'd be a gang leader when his father eventually died but he didn't think it would be this soon. He's eighteen when he hears about a kid who blew up his house— And he's been nineteen for a few minutes when he helps the kid fake his death, finds him a new birth certificate and decides that he will always be protected by Business Bay. So he's nineteen when Business Bay stops selling, it's not a popular decision but Deo knows it's worth it. When he apologises to the kid, Tom, he goes by Tommy now. And he means it, he knows that has to count for something with the sparkle in his eye. "As long as Business Bay stands, we will protect you—in whatever way you need," Deo promises. He's been nineteen for three days. The kid keeps his distance for a long time, still within the organisation but never talking to the people taking him in.

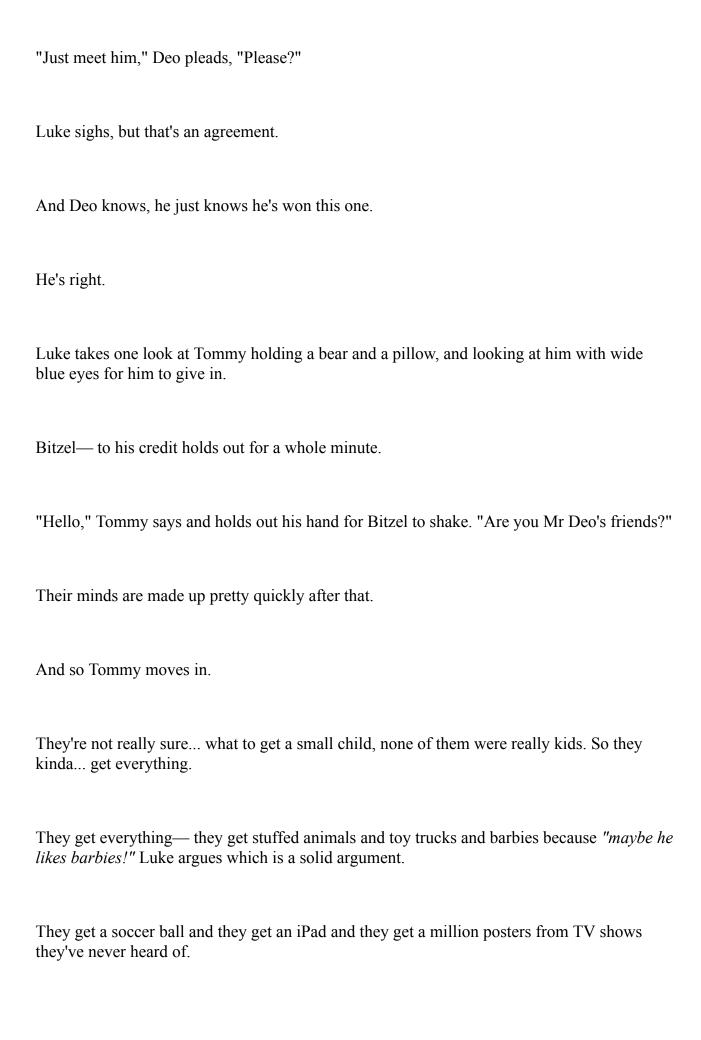
Deo never blames him.

They're essentially the reason his parents died.
So Tommy is allowed to be angry. And he's allowed to stay angry.
The anger changes into something softer. Deo's not sure when it happened and he never asks Tommy.
He thinks a couple of things helped.
One day it was early in the morning, Deo was sitting in the building and Tommy was sitting on the floor, playing with a truck absentmindedly.
Deo was well almost solely in charge of Tommy. He's the person who would find him a house to stay in, members of Business Bay who would take him in for a couple of days to a month
He felt a bit like a foster worker.
Apart from the fact, there's a gun under his desk and another weapon strapped to the bottom of his chair.
And the windows are bullet proof
It's quiet, Tommy doesn't speak much because he never speaks a lot. He's a calm kid, everyone who houses him comments on how lovely he is.



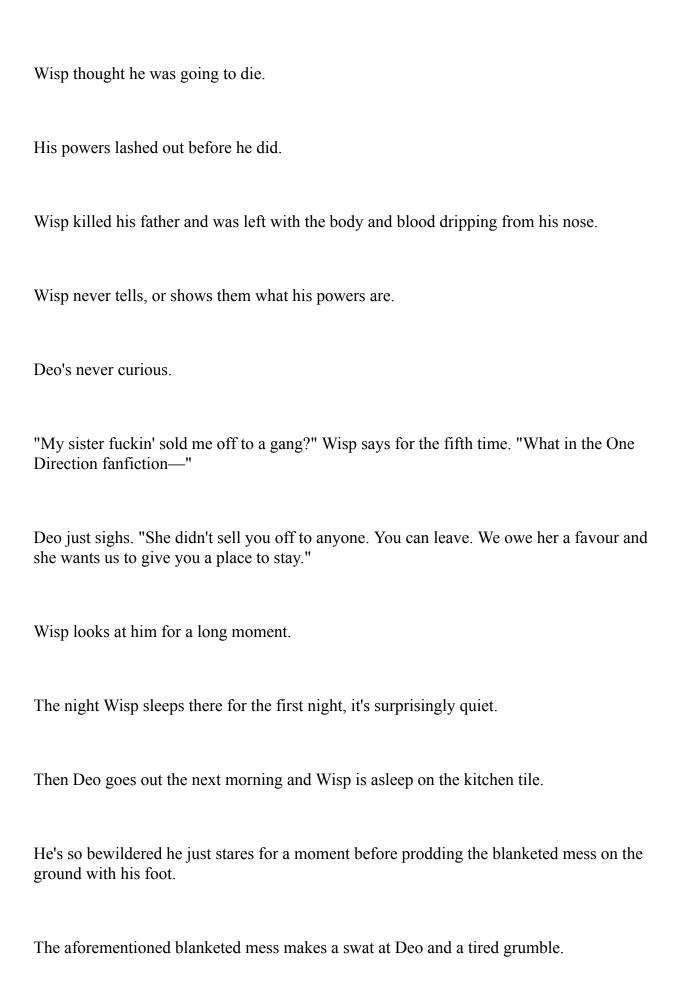






The room is bright, with a single bed with an eye-sore of a doona that Bitzel bought. It has a pillow shaped like an avocado and it is maybe the ugliest room Deo's ever seen.
The walls themselves are just white, he's not letting them paint them. They do have a massive light-blue cloud-shaped rug, however, which is very fluff and nice.
Along the wall, next to the door is a large bookshelf, which has an actual storage cupboard in it. Part of it is for all the board games and stuffed animals, and part of it is for clothes.
Bitzel is in charge of clothes—
There's a reason Tommy never develops a sense of fashion beyond hoodies.
Deo is in charge of child-proofing the house because they have way too many weapons laying about for a child to be here.
There are knives hidden under couch cushions and guns stuffed in cabinets. There are weapons everywhere which is fine, they just need to be in places Tommy can't reach.
They need their guns and weapons around, in case someone attacks. But now they need to put them on top of cabinets or lock them somewhere.
So that's his job.
It's a bit dull.
It's a terrible amount of just moving shit around and buying like ten combination locks.

Wis	p falls into their life just before Tommy, or around the same time. Deo can't remember.
	knows Tommy wasn't in the house when they brought Wisp to the headquarters, which also their house. But the house had been childproofed.
Wis	p laughs about all the locks on the cabinets for guns and Deo shuts that down.
	s a Pandora's person, he claims he broke out of there but everyone doubts it. He certainly the scars to prove it, mottled, ugly scars that laced his arms and hands.
The	worst ones were the ones around his wrists.
	ver suppressants and handcuffs in one, they had rubbed away a layer of skin—more than and it had left a mess of a scar in its wake.
how	thinks Wisp ends up with them because all cons end up where they are. They're not sure to not be that. They're not sure how to be upstanding when they're not given a reason to pstanding.
Wis	p killed his father.
His allie	father was allegedly an important man, with lots of money and even more important es.



"Why are you on the floor?" Deo mutters, wishing he could stamp out the coldness in his voice.
"Mattress is too soft," Wisp mutters, he doesn't look ashamed, Wisp was always too good, or too tired, for shame. "Didn't have a fuckin' bed in Pandora's."
"You didn't have a bed?" Deo whispers.
"Ha. Pandora's is where the scum of the scum go," Wisp laughs. "You think they give a shit? Most people in there deserve it, I probably did."
"You didn't," Deo says. "You were sixteen."
Wisp just looks at him for a long moment. "At least the heroes didn't get me," Deo mutters, "Bunch of wankers, I'll take my chances in Pandora's."
Deo rolls his eyes. "Stop concerning yourself with heroes. They'll never have shit to do with us."
"Hope so," Wisp says. "Pandora's is—" he shudders. "Awful."
"What's it like?" Deo asks.
Wisp screws up his nose. "Depends. Ran into trouble early on with some people I shouldn't have run into trouble with. The guards had it against me because I killed the man who was going to up their pay and instead put some <i>'stupid liberal commie'</i> in charge."

Deo stares at him.



Tommy's arrival comes shortly after this, and Deo remembers it quite clearly. Wisp no longer slept on the kitchen floor and instead slept on the carpeted floor of his bedroom, it wasn't a huge fucking jump but it was a jump.

Deo double-checks all the locks and the childproofing measures, he puts all of their work stuff in the basement and makes sure that Luke does not have blood on the shirt he wears and he makes sure that Bitzel doesn't actually burn down the kitchen.

Put a bunch of— essentially teenage boys in an apartment with an odd child and things will not go well.

Tommy arrives quietly, Deo thanks the family that dropped him off and takes note of how Tommy actually has bags, suitcases and important things— not the trash bags that Deo got used to lugging around while he was in the system.

Good.

Tommy deserved to be part of a family, part of a community, part of something.

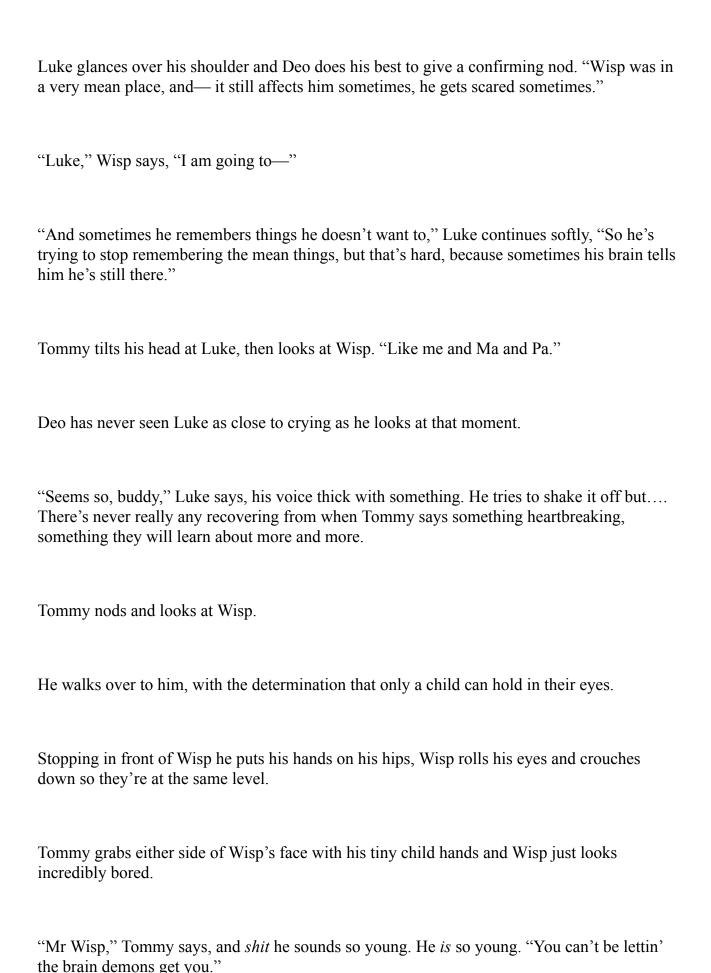
"Hi!" Tommy says brightly, he smiles and Deo notices he's missing one of his front teeth—wait does he have to do Tooth Fairy shit then—Deo doesn't know how to do Tooth Fairy shit. Wait, fuck they have to do Christmas and Easter because Tommy is a literal child now—

"Hello!" Deo says brightly.

Tommy grins.

Wisp walks out of his room, generally bringing the brooding air that follows someone when they've been in Pandora's for five years. He looks at Tommy by the front door and his entire face screws up.



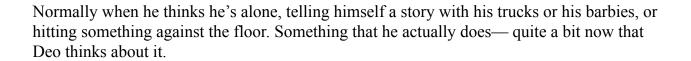




He's just a kid.
"Uh" Wisp says, "Have you seen your room yet?" He asks and Tommy's eyes darken a little.
"No."
"Come on Tommy," Luke says gently, "Don't you wanna see your bedroom? You have trucks."
"And barbies," Bitzel adds, "And books and— you also have this creepy dog thing"
Tommy nods slowly, before looking up at Luke, he grabs Luke's hand and lets himself get lead away to his bedroom.
Wisp immediately turns to Deo, "What the fuck is up with that kid—"
"He was abused," Deo hisses, looking over his shoulder. "Badly, from all I've been told and all I know. He's odd, and he apparently has very powerful enhancements—"
"That's why you're keeping him here," Wisp hisses, "You're gonna fucking— use him like a —"
Then Wisp jumps and they both whack against the floor, pain bursts through the back of Deo's head and for a moment the world spins and Deo can't think of anything. What he should be doing is grabbing his gun or starting to scream, what he actually does is watch idly as Wisp points a gun at his forehead.

[&]quot;Huh?" Deo says.





Deo... should probably ask someone qualified about that.

But Tommy is bright, it's the only way Deo can describe him.

He has a big personality, he is a vibrant person— Deo already knows this from the glimpses of Tommy, the times he laughs too hard before looking at the closest adult like they're gonna hit him.

"Hi," Deo says one afternoon.

He's done with the various tasks that happen when you're the leader of a gang. Mostly like... Deo doesn't even know, it's not like murder is on the daily agenda. It's more organising, if he ever has to go to a parent-teacher interview for Tommy he'll say he works in HR, it's basically the same thing.

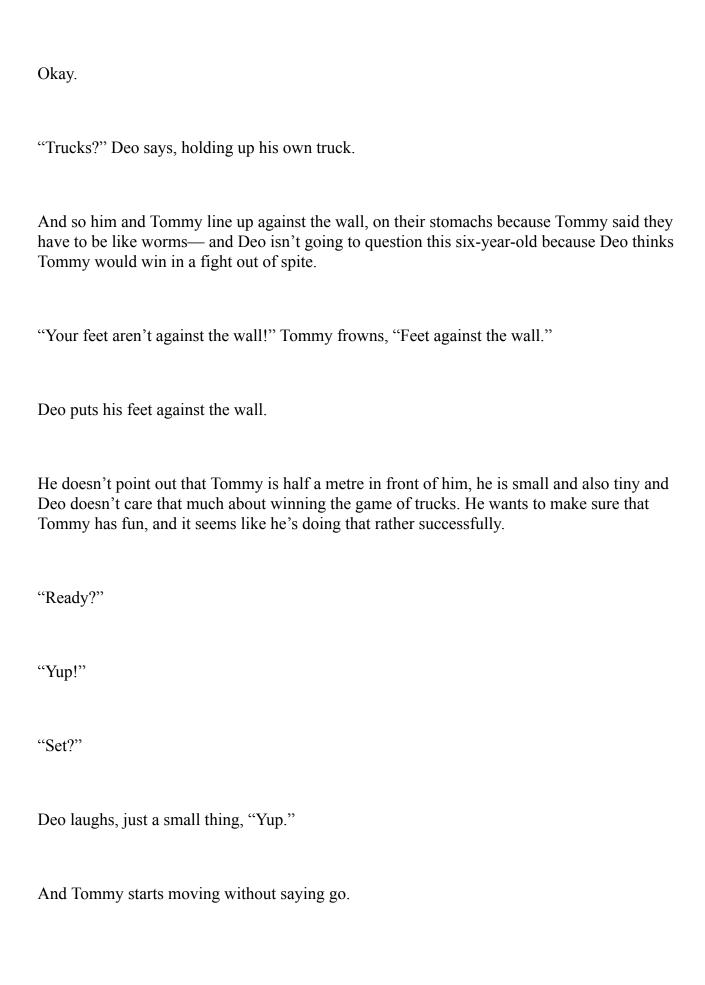
Tommy looks up from his seemingly intense games of trucks. "Hi." He says his voice seems smaller than usual.

"Can I play trucks with you?" Deo asks and Tommy blinks at him. "If you want to of course."

"You want to play trucks?" Tommy asks.

"Yeah," Deo sits down on the floor, crossing his legs and looking at Tommy, Tommy watches him carefully. "Again if you don't want me to that's okay."

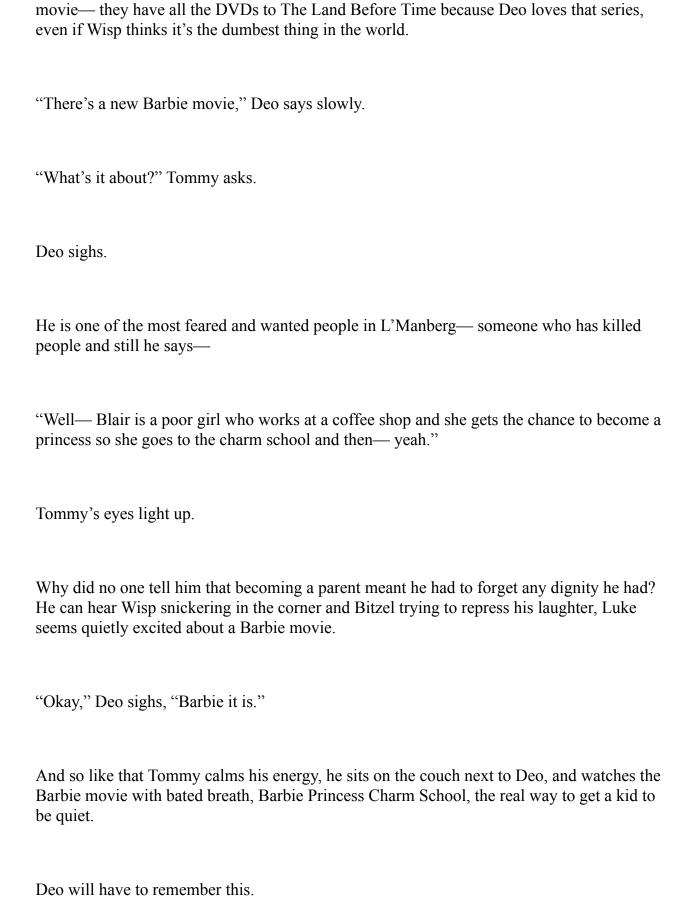




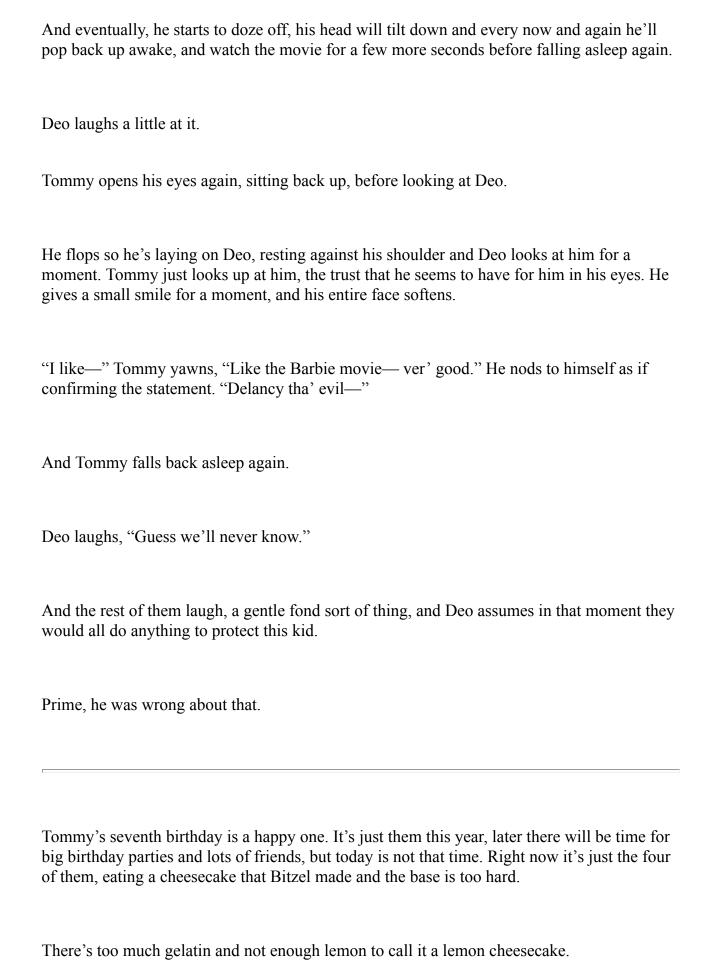


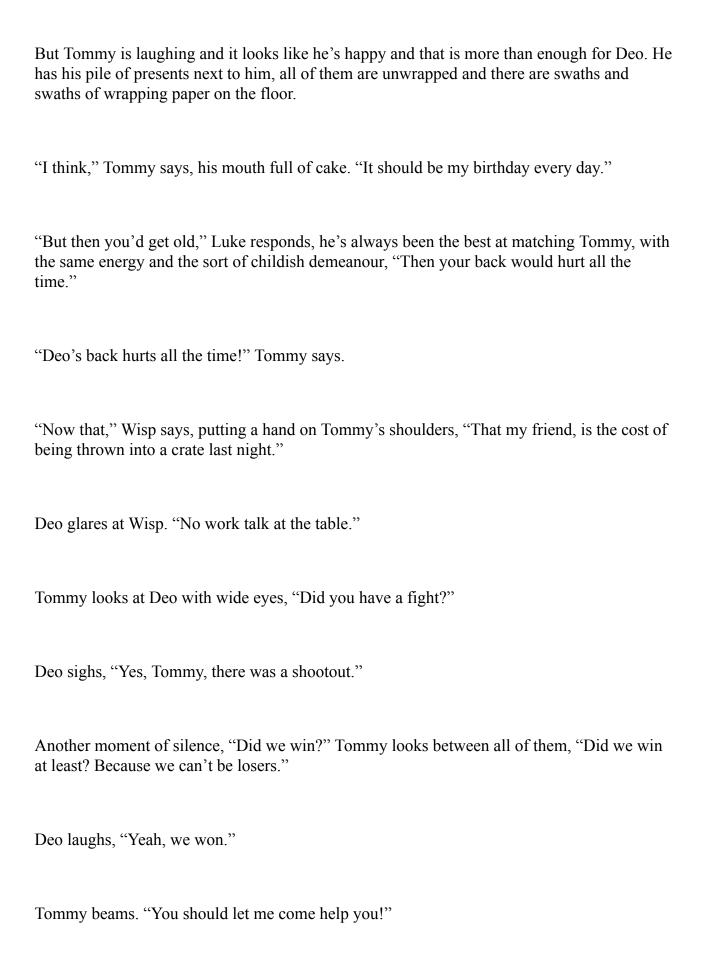
And Tommy becomes well himself, with bright eyes and a wide smile and a certain way he speaks which is a bit too close to Wisp's for Deo's comfort.
It's nice.
Tommy becomes himself, he's brighter, he's happier and everyone sees it.
Tommy decides early on that his favourite thing in the entire world is bacon. Then he decides that it's the worst movie Deo has ever seen in his life, and then he decides he really likes Home Alone, which is a better movie.
So Deo accepts it.
Now they're watching Home Alone for the fifth time this week.
It's Wednesday.
"Get 'em!" Tommy yells.
He's standing on the rug, with both his hands up in the air as he whoops and encourages Kevin and the various amounts of violence he's doing. He cheers whenever one of the robbers, who have names but Deo doesn't remember, gets hurt.
"Take that!" He pumps his fist in the air, jumping up and down and somehow shaking the entire floor despite being literally a tiny bean. He walks up to the TV, holding both sides and shaking it back and forth.

Of course, Tommy is a rather small person, so he doesn't manage to shake it much, but Wisp yells and stands up and makes sure the TV doesn't fall onto him.
"Get wrecked! Get wrecked!" Tommy claps his hands together and jumps up and down as Kevin outplays literally everyone else in the movie, it's almost amusing, it would be if he hadn't done this every other time he's watched it.
Luke is on the edge of his seat, clapping when Tommy does and cheering when he does.
Bitzel is just on his phone.
And Wisp looks very stressed about Tommy shaking the TV.
Deo sighs, leaning back into the couch, he needs to show Tommy an actually calming movie — one that doesn't get him yelling and jumping around before bed. Because Deo's not sure how much longer he can do this whole energy thing.
Why did no one tell him that raising a child was so fucking tiring?
"Okay, buddy," Deo says gently, and Tommy turns around, pouting at him.
"Mister Deo I wanna watch Home Alone—"
"What about we try a new movie?" Deo says, and he doesn't even try to stamp out the hope in his voice, because he is <i>so</i> fucking tired of Home Alone, Tommy has grabbed this movie and decided it is going to be the only thing anyone in this house consumes for the rest of time.
Tommy pouts.



Deo tries to go through the movies that he knows off the top of his head, there's a new Barbie





"Nope," Bitzel looks up from his cheesecake which he is attacking with a fork. "You are never coming to a shootout."
"I'm useful!" Tommy says, looking at Deo desperately, "I can be useful! Ma and Pa said I can be useful, I can help you guys out! I'm strong!"
Deo isn't sure whether to laugh or cry.
Wisp gives a sad smile, giving Deo a look and then leaning towards Tommy. "Kid, you don't need to be useful."
"But I want to be!"
Wisp looks out of his depth and he sighs, "I know kid, but you don't have to be. You're only little still, and we don't want you to get hurt."
The cheesecake eating ends rather quickly after that, and since it's already Tommy's bedtime, Deo is the one who takes him to bed.
He follows Tommy into his room.
It's a quiet affair, even as Tommy and Deo carry all his presents into his room which rustle because of the sheer amount of them. Deo has most of them but Tommy carries two boxes and does it like he owns the world.
He dumps them all on the ground, looking up at Deo.
Luckily, Tommy is wearing his Peppa Pig pajamas already, so doesn't have much protest as he clambers into bed underneath the covers.

"I wanna help," Tommy mumbles quietly, looking at Deo with the broken sort of soft expression that he's mastered. "Please let me help, I just wanna be helpful."

"But buddy," Deo crouches down so he's a bit shorter than Tommy, "We don't want you to get hurt. What about your big plans? You're gonna grow up, and then you're gonna live a very happy life."

He taps Tommy on the nose as he says this, which makes Tommy screw up his face.

"No," he laughs, "Kids like me don't live that long. Their Ma's and Pa's hurt them too badly."

Okay, Deo is probably going to start crying. "That's not true," he says gently, "You're here now, we're not going to hurt you."

"Well *duh* I know that," Tommy says like it's the most obvious thing in the world, he rolls his eyes with the sass that only a recently turned seven-year-old can manage. "But— mean kids like me don't live that long— they get hurt."

"You're not going to get hurt."

"I can't even see myself as seventeen," Tommy says, "That's so far away— I'm gonna be old, I'm going to have to move out! I don't want to move out, I want to be here forever! You're nice to me, the world is mean to me—"

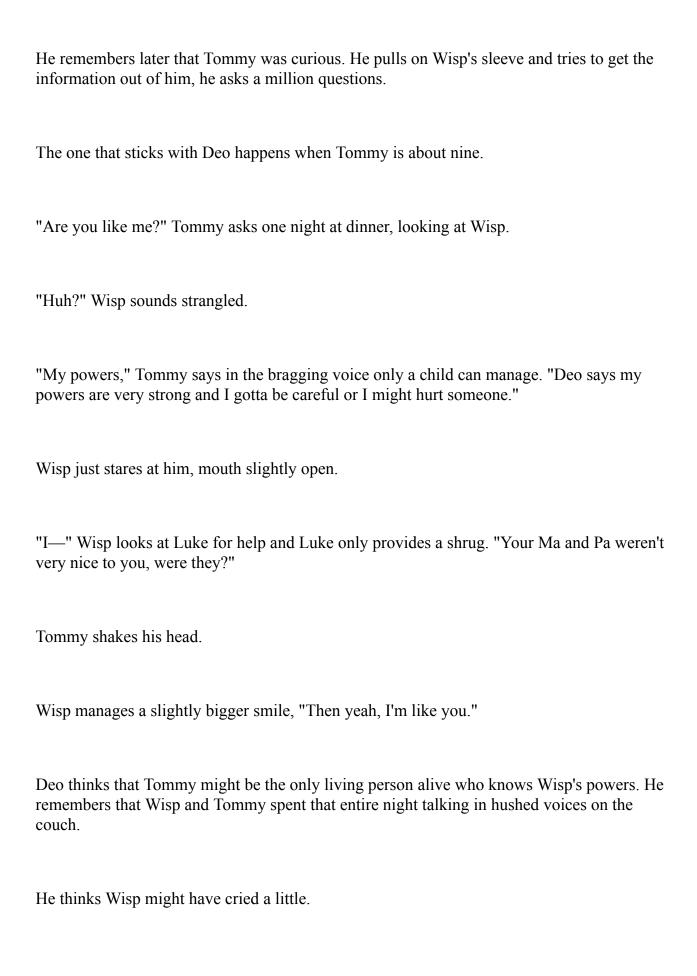
"No, buddy," Deo says gently, "The world will be kind to you. I promise you."

Tommy shakes his head, "Then why hasn't it been?"

Deo opens his mouth and closes it again, before putting both hands on Tommy's shoulders, "Buddy," he says gently, "Sometimes— sometimes mean people hurt nice people. I don't



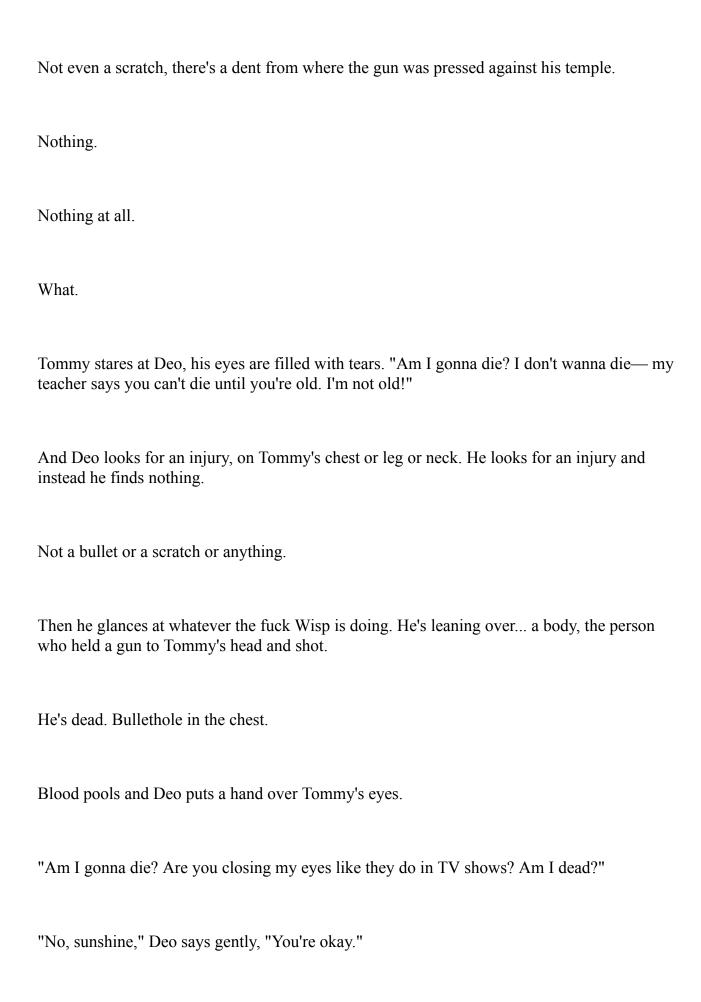
"Buddy—" Deo says, "Please always tell me when you get sad. Even if you don't know why I might not be able to fix it but I'll help you. No matter how dumb you think it is, if you need a hug or some chocolate, I'll help."
Tommy looks at him with a quivering lip. His eyes are filled with tears and it looks like he's using all of his effort to not cry.
"Would you like a hug?"
Tommy nods.
Deo wraps his arms around Tommy, hugging him to his chest. He's still small, he's always been a small kid, and Deo picks him up, hugging him with as much force as he can, Tommy hugs him back and buries his face into his shoulder.
"You're gonna live a very long and happy life," Deo promises, hugging him tightly, "And when you're seventeen, and getting ready to go out into the big wide world, and do amazing things, I'll be there. On your seventeenth birthday, I'll be there."
Tommy leans back to look at him.
Then he bursts into tears.
Deo can't do anything but hold him and promise it'll be alright.
Because it will.
It will be alright, just not now.



He knows Tommy comforted him though.
And Deo remembers how the pride swells in his chest. The way he smiles at the closed door that leads into the living room. And he remembers knowing that Tommy would do amazing things.
Wisp and Tommy appear to be alike. Wisp is more violent, he has a cruel edge to him and Tommy just has a childlike innocence around him.
They're alike.
When Tommy is eight he has a gun pushed against his temple.
Deo remembers what it's like to be scared again.
He stares at Deo with wide, confused eyes and Deo finds that breathing has become a lot harder because it's Tommy—
It was a weapons deal gone wrong and Tommy wasn't in his room but he was supposed to be and instead he was in the hallway and the weapons dealer ran into the hallway, where Tommy was standing and he got grabbed, and now there's a gun against his forehead.
Tommy stares at Deo, and there's trust in his eyes. There's far too much trust, Tommy trusts that Deo will get him out of this.
He isn't so sure.







"Why are you covering my eyes?" Tommy yells, "They only do that to dead people!"

Deo looks at Wisp, his expression screams help in every form he has. Wisp gives him one of the expressions that scream 'I don't fucking know!'

"Uh—" Wisp says. "Deo's doing a super secret check-up on you, it's an old method that gang members do. To make sure you're okay."

"Right, that—" Deo says.

Blood starts spilling toward them and Deo manages to pick Tommy up so his shoes don't get blood on them at least.

He manages to keep a hand over Tommy's eyes and Deo turns to look at the body.

Bullet hole in the chest. It... doesn't make any fucking sense. How does that happen to someone?

"Tommy, sunshine," Deo says carefully, looking at the body in the hallway. He hopes the blood doesn't spread into the rooms too far. It keeps spreading and Deo forgot how much a person bleeds. "You know the one rule about our house?"

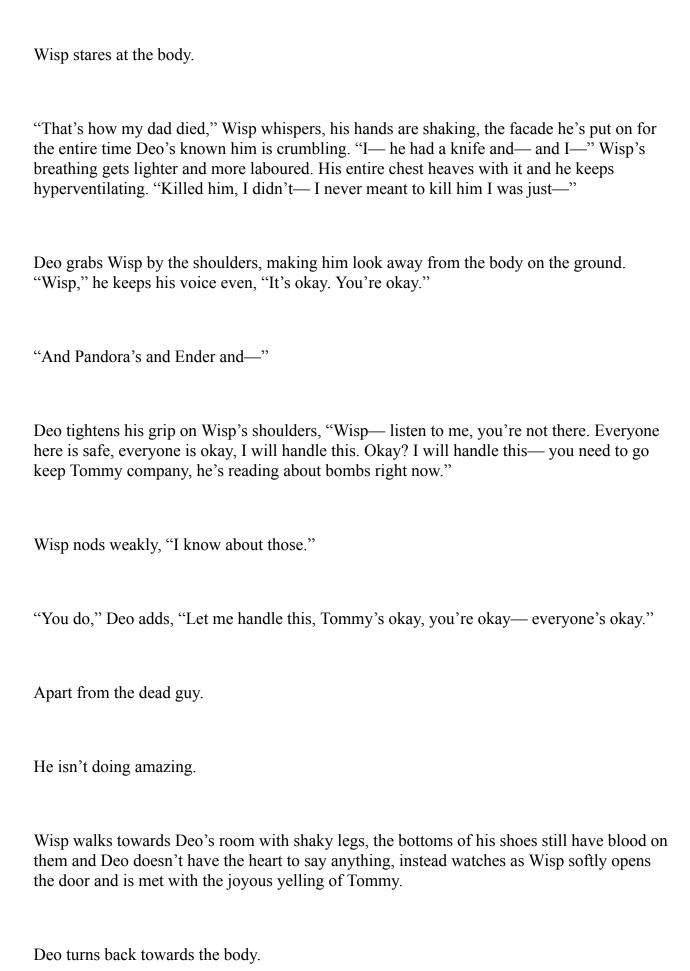
"Yeah!" Tommy says brightly, "Don't go into the office— or the basement— or your bedroom— or that weird room under the stairs— and don't touch the weapons until Wisp teaches me how to use one."

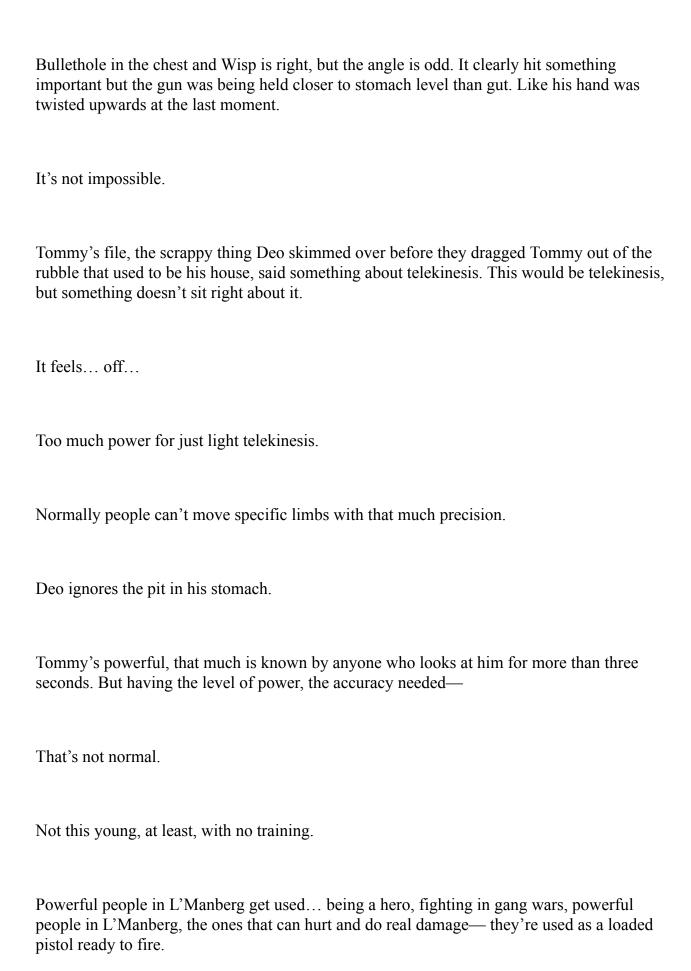
Deo shoots Wisp a look.



Tommy looks even happier with himself and nods happily.

Deo rushes out of the room, before ending in the hallway with so much blood on the floor—he's going to have to call the cleaners and that's always fun because then they make fun of how many kills keep happening here.
Wisp is leaning over the dead guy, holding the gun.
"Tommy did this," Wisp eventually says.
"Huh?"
"His— powers," Wisp eventually manages, "You said he has powerful powers, I'm guessing they defend him in dangerous situations. Ones that could harm him."
"I don't fuckin' know," Deo mutters, kicking the dead guy in the leg. He doesn't wanna dispose of this body, that's always the fucking worst. "I was supposed to be training— I didn't know everyone we sold to before Dad died, just knew one of 'em had a kid born with fucking wild powers."
Wisp frowns, "I think Tommy moved his hand, the angle makes sense, it's originated at like — the right height and it tilts up into his heart, I think."
Deo stares at the dead man on the floor.
Tommy did this.
Tommy—
"You're never going to tell him that," Deo says. "While Tommy is in this house he won't see death. I won't let him see a dead body, or hurt anyone on purpose. Alright?"







Which was why at five o'clock on a Friday, instead of playing some mind game in a dodgy bar, he was sitting in a school hallway next to his—son? Brother? It was a bit murky, the relationship, it felt at least a bit paternal—

Deo would question himself if he was a teacher.

Anyway, he's sitting next to Tommy, as the family across from him gives him the biggest stink-eye in the fucking world. And like—he gets it, Deo is only like... twenty-three, *holy Prime he's old*. And he looks like a young person.

He has a couple of tattoos, he has a couple of concerningly big scars around his neck. Deo probably should have worn a better outfit, because the bomber jacket and the white shirt that might have blood on it was not the correct choice—

He doesn't think it has blood on it.

... he hopes it doesn't have blood on it.

He leans against the chair, looking at Tommy who seems unimpressed, his leg is bouncing at a rapid speed and he looks like he's about to explode from the general stress that seems to come with being Tommy.

It's almost funny.

"Am I in trouble?" Tommy asks.

Oh great now the parents are going to judge the shit outta him.

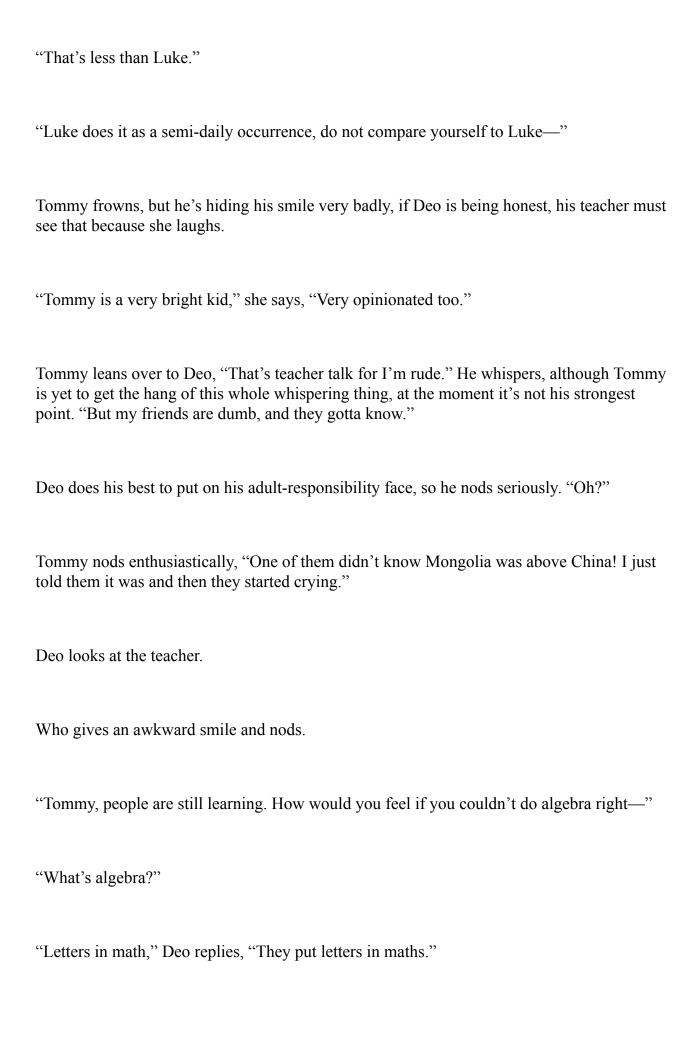
"No, buddy," Deo says, ignoring the eyes on him.

He's the leader of one of the most notorious and dangerous gangs in L'Manberg and right now his biggest fear is the judging eyes of parents around him. Was anyone gonna tell him how shitty parents are to each other? Or was he just supposed to find that out himself?

"Normally when people sit in the hallway they're in trouble."











"It's not a big deal," Tommy mutters, "My parents got angry at each other a lot and I'd try to calm them down."
"Tommy you were six."
"They got worse as I got older," Tommy mumbles, "I got loud and annoying and they got angry at me and each other and—" he pauses to shrug slightly. "They were nice when I was little, we were normal, went to fairs and— I think I went to playschool, it was fine."
"And somewhere between it being normal and you deciding to—"
"I didn't mean to do that!" Tommy yells, he hits his hands against the dashboard, an action he's picked up from Luke, "I never— I didn't know— I still don't know what happened, I was scared and they were going to—" he shudders, "Hurt me."
They both know what Tommy's talking about.
And maybe if Deo was a better parent he'd try push the subject, get Tommy to say the actual words, but Deo doesn't want to hear the words and Tommy doesn't want to say it, so instead Tommy skirts around the topic, the way he always does.
"That's not my fault!"
"I know," Deo says evenly, "I'm just— trying to get it. Tommy you were— you are a kid, you were even younger when you were deescalating what seems like violent and abusive fights between your parents."
Tommy shrugs.
"Tommy—" Deo pinches the bridge of his nose, "Tommy that's not <i>normal</i> ."



Deo wipes his eyes to little success, "No—no, don't—don't apologise, just—" he wipes at his eyes more, to little avail, "I'm sad for you, sad because you shouldn't have had to go through that and—you might not understand now but when you're older, I hope you look back and realise what they did wasn't okay."

"I know that," Tommy says evenly, leaning his head against the dashboard, before turning so he's looking at Deo. "It was mean, but— we were normal sometimes, and that was good! I liked that, Ma would brush my hair and Pa would play video games with me!"

Deo looks at Tommy for a moment longer, the hopefulness on his face and the genuine joy knowing his parents did below the bare minimum. But it was above the bar he was used to, and Deo feels—unwell.

"I'm so sorry," Deo says.

Tommy just looks at him curiously.

"For what you went through, and how Business Bay was involved and—" he cuts himself off, trying to stop himself from sobbing. "I'm so sorry."

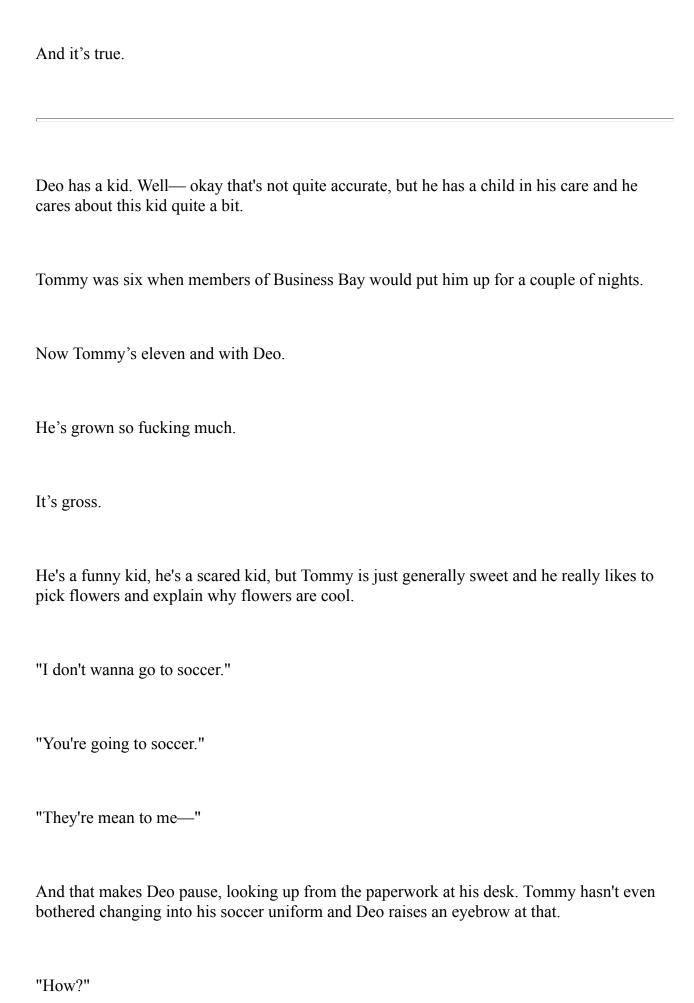
"You weren't in charge," Tommy mutters, "You can't say sorry for your Pa's decisions."

Deo just looks at him. "You're too forgiving."

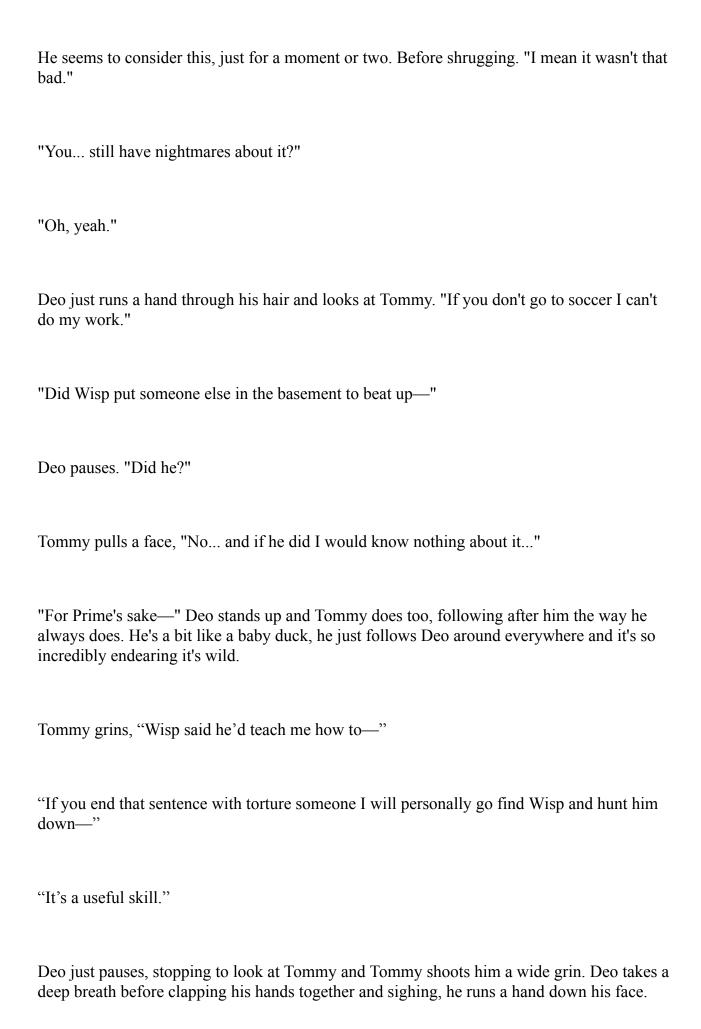
"I can be— not forgiving?" Tommy says slowly, "If that will make you feel better?"

Deo laughs, shaking his head. "You're a fuckin' idiot."

"I'm your favourite idiot!" Tommy says brightly.









"Like a best friend?"

"Yeah!" Deo nods, "Or a family member, or a partner, it changes from person to person. And if you can get someone who cares *a lot* about a lot of people, you're in the clear."

Tommy pauses, looking down at the ground then back up at Deo. "Should I stop caring about people? If they might use it against me."

Deo looks at Tommy, Tommy with wide eyes and curly blond hair and is probably a bit too comfortable with holding a gun for his age. Tommy who laughs too hard at jokes and still loves the movie Home Alone and Barbie Princess Charmschool, Tommy who loves with everything he has and then a little bit more.

"No," Deo shakes his head, "Never stop caring, that's what makes us human. That's why we get up, because we care—maybe about ourselves, but humans care for each other, it's just what we do, I guess."

"Do you have people you care about?" Tommy asks.

Deo gestures around him, at the house, "Everyone I care about lives within these walls, Wisp, Bitzel, Luke— and you, I couldn't stop caring about them— and you, if I tried. I don't want to, I like to think it makes me stronger."

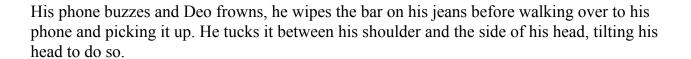
"But... what if someone uses it against you?"

"What if they don't?" Deo challenges, "And I spend my life alone?"

Tommy goes quiet at this, nodding his head. "You're smart."

Deo snorts at that, shaking his head and starting to walk towards the basement again, to see if Wisp is beating the shit out of someone in the basement. Probably. But Deo, for once, wants





"Yeah?" Deo says, "I'm working right now—"

"What are the causes of World War One?" Tommy asks.

"Tommy, I'm working," Deo mutters, he holds up a hand as if an apology to the other gang leader currently bleeding out from several cuts on his face. "Where the fuck is Luke?"

"He doesn't know," Tommy says.

"Google it," Deo sighs, "Tommy, I am right in the middle of something kid—" he holds the phone away from his face, "Stop whimpering I swear— just give me like five minutes." He brings the phone back to his ear. "Tommy... buddy—"

"Please?" Tommy asks.

Deo sighs, "Basically everyone got really into nationalism, which is pride for your country—lots of countries had a lot of colonies and they really wanted to show off their power. Basically, men wanting to show they had power."

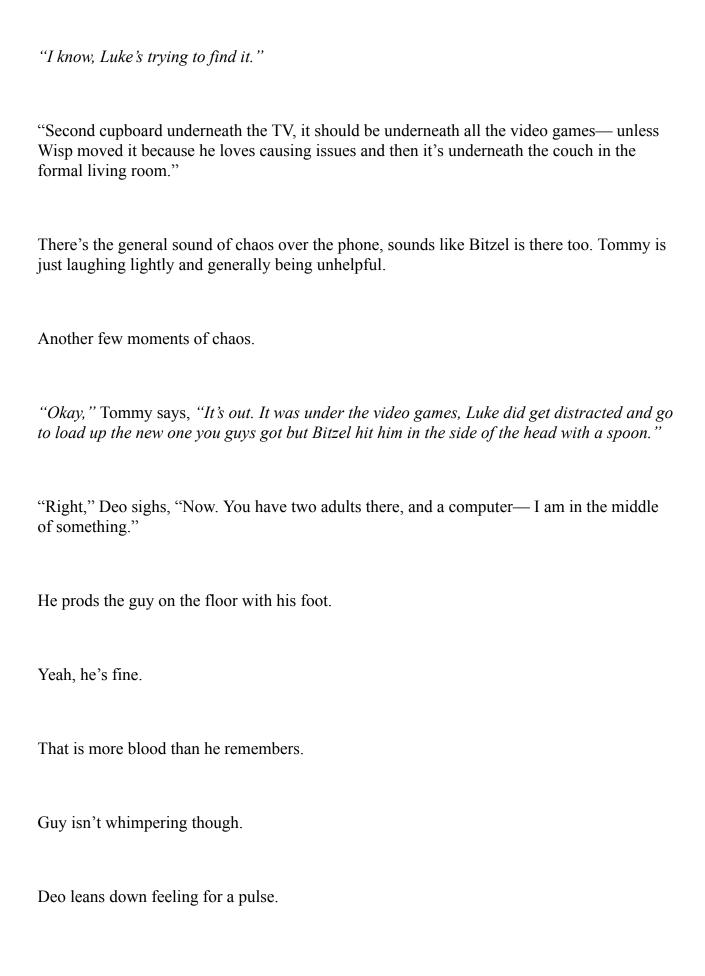
"Okay... okay—"

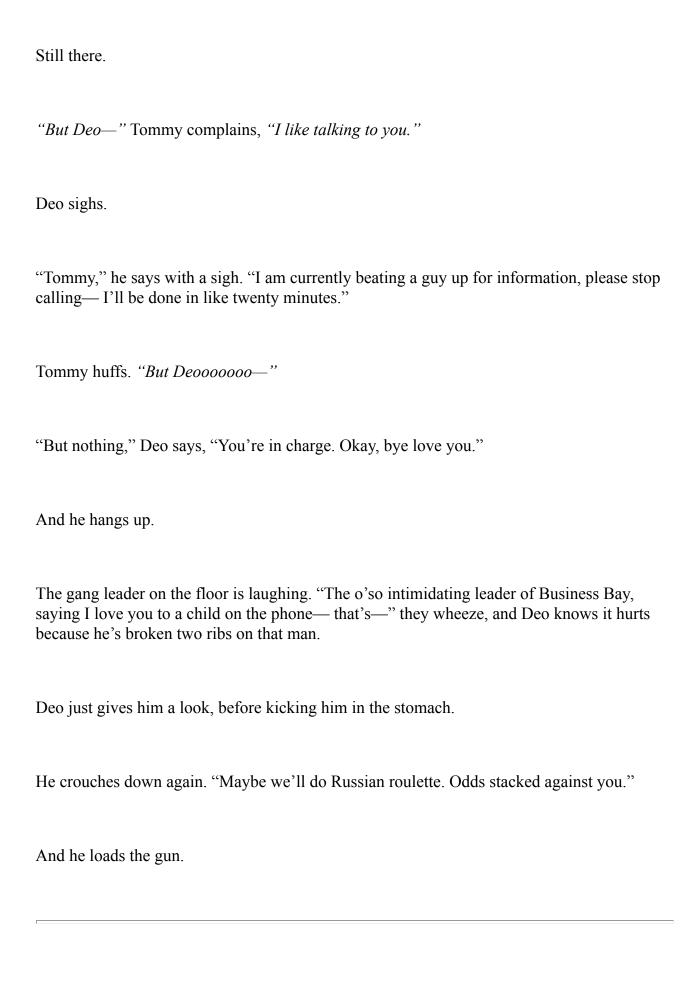
"And there were advanced technologies, they were inventing like way more guns and weapons that could cause problems. Then tensions rose because of that and a bunch of people were making treaties because of this technology, then someone assassinated the next in line to like inherit the Austro-Hungarian Empire."

Deo looks over his shoulder.

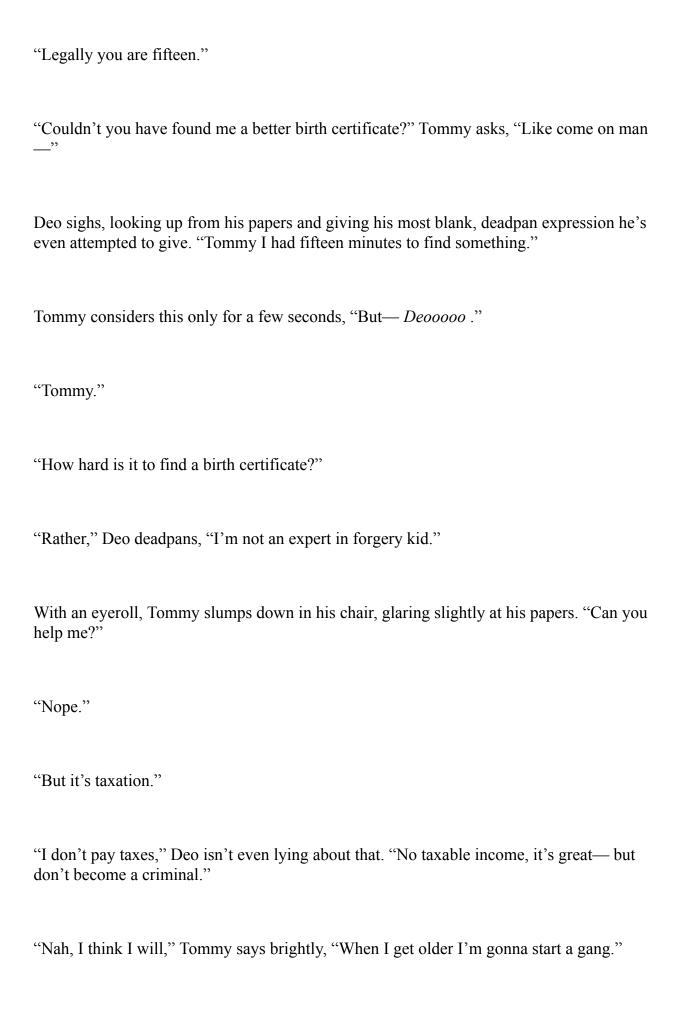








"Tommy," Deo pushes one of the books to the side of the table. "I mean this so kindly, what the fuck is this?"
"Homework," Tommy says, his mouth full of the chips he's chewing on. He grabs another handful and stuffs them into his face. "I'm doin' homework like a normal human child."
"That implies you are not a normal human child," Deo sighs. He stacks some of the books up on each other, trying to save a little bit of space because Deo also has shit to do, and his desk is not big enough. "You are both human and a child."
"I'm normal," Tommy says, mouth full of chips.
Deo is rapidly aging.
"What part of you is normal?" Deo deadpans.
Tommy shrugs, before looking down at his hands, then he grabs a piece of hair and flattens it over his forehead. "I mean my hair is pretty normal."
"Oh?"
Tommy just glares, "Deo, why are you making me do classes that are like—three years older than I am."
"The government is making you do classes for people three years older than you are," Deo mutters absent-mindedly, putting his own papers on the desk. "Because you are legally fifteen, remember?"
"I'm twelve."







"Oh," Deo mutters.
Tommy laughs, throwing a pencil at his head. "You're dumb. I know you care."
And Deo doesn't know this, but Tommy will believe that forever, even when things go wrong and they go badly and Business Bay inevitably ends in tragedy. Still, Tommy will know Deo cared, all this time.
But nice things don't always last, and in a theme that seems pretty fitting for the life of Tommy, this isn't any exception to the rule that has defined his life. Nice things don't last, cruel things last for too long.
And in the end Tommy loses everyone.

End Notes

Hope you enjoyed! I'll try get back to comments on this one but I might just be overwhelmed because of all the other stuff being uploaded at the same time, sending you all love!

Please <u>drop by the Archive and comment</u> to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!